

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING, MAY 21, 1975

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM FUNSETH, S/PRS

NO. 9

FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF ACTING SPOKESMAN FUNSETH'S REPLIES
TO QUESTIONS AT TODAY'S BRIEFING (MAY 21), MOST OF WHICH
CONCERNED DEVELOPMENTS IN LAOS. FUNSETH ALSO ANSWERED
QUESTIONS ON KIDNAPPING OF THREE US STUDENTS IN TANZANIA
AND READ STATEMENT ON MURDER OF TWO USAF OFFICERS IN TEHRAN.

1. LAOS --

A. VIENTIANE - SOME 200 DEMONSTRATORS BROKE INTO AID COM-
POUND 1 A.M. TODAY VIENTIANE TIME AND STILL OCCUPY PREMISES.
UNDERSTAND THREE AMERICANS -- TWO MARINE GUARDS AND ONE
CONTRACT ELECTRICIAN - ARE STILL IN COMPOUND. EMBASSY
REPORTS NO INJURIES TO ANY AMERICANS BUT SOME DAMAGE TO
U.S. PROPERTY.

CHARGE CHAPMAN IMMEDIATELY PROTESTED COMPLETE LACK OF
POLICE PROTECTION TO PRIMIN, FONMIN, AND MININT. POLICE
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HAVE BEEN DISPATCHED BUT, AT LEAST REPORT, ARE NOT INTER-

VENING FORCEFULLY.

B. SAVANNAKHET - MININT TOLD CHARGE HE PLANS LEAVE FOR SAVANNAKHET TODAY, BUT WE HAVE RECEIVED NO CONFIRMATION HE HAS LEFT. EMBASSY REPORTS ALL AMERICANS IN SAVANNAKHET ARE WELL.

C. AMERICAN PRESENCE - GIVEN CONTINUING SITUATION IN SAVANNAKHET AND MOST RECENT INCIDENTS IN VIENTIANE, WE ARE REDUCING NUMBER OF USG EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES IN LAOS. SINCE WE FIRST ANNOUNCED THINNING OUT LAST WEEK, WHEN WE ESTIMATED ABOUT 1,000 OFFICIAL AND NON-OFFICIAL AMERICANS TO BE IN LAOS, EMBASSY HAS NOT REPORTED ACTUAL NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO HAVE LEFT. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT A FEW HAVE LEFT.

D. GENERAL SITUATION - FLIGHT OF MANY PROMINENT VIENTIAN SIDE MILITARY AND POLITICAL LEADERS HAS LED TO PATHET LAO (PL) DOMINATION OF COALITION. PL UNITS ENTERING TOWNS IN SOUTH HAVE MET NO VIENTIANE MILITARY RESISTANCE. THEREFORE, PL APPARENTLY IS EXERCISING MORE AND MORE CONTROL OVER DIRECTION RLG TAKES.

E. AID TO LAOS - (IN THE CASE OF LAOS) IT IS PREMATURE TO DISCUSS ANY U.S. PROHIBITIONS ON AID TO COMMUNIST GOVTS. HOWEVER, LAST WEEK WE MENTIONED OUR ENTIRE AID PROGRAM FOR LAOS WAS UNDER REVIEW AND, DURING COURSE OF THIS REVIEW, AID PROGRAM HAS BEEN RESTRICTED.

2. KIDNAPPINGS IN TANZANIA - EMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM HAS REPORTED THREE U.S. STANFORD UNIVERSITY STUDENTS (AND ONE DUTCH STUDENT) WERE KIDNAPPED FROM RESEARCH CENTER ON LAKE TANGANYIKA BY ARMED AFRICANS ON NIGHT OF MAY 19-20. EMBASSY IS IN TOUCH WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS AND EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO SECURE STUDENT'S RELEASE.

3. MURDER IN TEHRAN - AT START OF BRIEFING, FUNSETH READ FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON MURDER OF TWO USAF OFFICERS IN TEHRAN: BEGIN TEXT. THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WAS DEEPLY DISTRESSED TO LEARN OF THE MURDER OF TWO UNITED STATES UNCLASSIFIED

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AIR FORCE OFFICERS IN TEHRAN TODAY: COLONEL PAUL R. SCHAFER, JR., AND LIEUTENANT COLONEL JACK H. TURNER.

WE DEPLORE AND CONDEMN THIS TERRORIST ACT OF CALCULATED BRUTALITY AGAINST AMERICAN PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO DUTIES IN A COUNTRY WITH WHICH WE ENJOY CLOSE AND FRIENDLY RELATIONS. WE EXTEND OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO THE FAMILIES OF THESE TWO OFFICERS.

WE ARE ALSO CONFIDENT THAT THESE MURDERS, EVIDENTLY CARRIED OUT BY A BAND OF PROFESSIONAL ASSASSINS, DO NOT REPRESENT THE SENTIMENTS OF THE IRANIAN PEOPLE TOWARD AMERICANS SERVING THERE. THE STRONG TIES BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES, REINFORCED BY THE SHAH'S CONVERSATIONS DURING HIS RECENT STATE VISIT, REMAIN.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE PRIME MINISTER AND CHIEF OF THE SUPREME COMMANDER'S STAFF IN TEHRAN HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR CONDOLENCES FOR THESE KILLINGS.

WE HAVE ALSO BEEN ASSURED THAT THE IRANIAN AUTHORITIES ARE LAUNCHING AN INVESTIGATION TO APPREHEND THE MURDERERS.
END TEXT.

4. FOURTH REFUGEE RECEPTION CENTER - WE PRESS RELEASED ANNOUNCEMENT THAT DEAN BROWN HAS ACCEPTED DOD'S RECOMMENDATION OF INDIANTOWN GAP MILITARY RESERVATION, PENNSYLVANIA, AS FOURTH RECEPTION CENTER AND HIS DIRECTIVE THAT IT PREPARE TO RECEIVE ITS FIRST ARRIVALS FROM GUAM WEEK OF MAY 26.

5. OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY BRIEFING - ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS BRIEFED PRESS ON WHAT HE TERMED "MOST SUCCESSFUL OAS MEETING IN HISTORY OF ORGANIZATION." MOST QUESTIONS WERE ON ELECTION OF NEW SECGEN, OAS AND CUBA ISSUE, AND UPCOMING MEETING IN SAN JOSE. INGERSOLL

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